

Message Text

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13

ACTION EA-01

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PA-01 INR-01 PRS-01 /005 W

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O R 250850Z SEP 73

FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

TO USINFO/WASHDC IMMEDIATE

INFO RUEHCQHOCJCSTATE 3135

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

SECDEF WASHDC

UNCLAS PHNOM PENH 10277

USINFO ALSO FOR VOA NEWSROOM

USINFO ALSO FOR IEA

BANGKOK FOR HEDGES

BANGKOK AND SAIGON FOR VOA CORRESPONDENTS

STATE S/PRS AND EA/P

CAMBODIAN SITUATIONER

1. A 5-MAN COMMUNIST SAPPER TEAM ATTACKED THE ELECTRIC PLANT SERVING THE SOUTHERN PART OF PHNOM PENH AT MIDNIGHT MONDAY. THEY FIRED AT LEAST 10 B-41 ROCKETS AT TWO OPERATING GENERATORS KNOCKING THEM TEMPORARILY OUT OF SERVICE. ONE GENERATOR IS EXPECTED TO BE FUNCTIONING WITHIN HOURS WHILE REPAIRS TO THE OTHER ARE EXPECTED TO TAKE LONGER. FIVE GOVERNMENT SOLDIERS WERE WOUNDED IN THE 30-MINUTE ATTACK.

2. ANOTHER MEKONG CONVOY ARRIVED SAFELY IN PHNOM PENH FROM SOUTH VIETNAMESE WATERS MONDAY NIGHT AND TUESDAY MORNING WITH ONLY ONE MINOR INCIDENT EN ROUTE. THE CONVOY WAS COMPOSED OF THREE TANKERS CARRYING FUEL OIL, UNCLASSIFIED

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KEROSENE, AVIATION GASOLINE AND INDUSTRIAL DIESEL FUEL

WHILE THE THREE CARGO SHIPS CARRIED GENERAL MERCHANDISE INCLUDING RED CROSS SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT FOR THE UNITED NATIONS CHILDRENS HOSPITAL. FIVE COMMUNIST 75 MM RECOILLESS RIFLE SHELLS STRUCK TWO OF THE CARGO SHIPS CAUSING MINOR DAMAGE AND NO CASUALTIES.

3. THE SITUATION IN KOMPONG CHAM CONTINUED TO IMPROVE AS THE KHMER GOVERNMENT AIR-LIFTED FOREIGN MILITARY ATTACHES INTO THE PROVINCIAL CAPITAL MONDAY TO INSPECT THE DAMAGE CAUSED BY THE MONTH-LONG COMMUNIST ASSAULT. THEY WERE BRIEFED ON THE MILITARY SITUATION BY BRIGADIER GENERAL SAR HOR, COMMANDER OF FANK FORCES AT KOMPONG CHAM. COMMUNIST GUNNERS FIRED SPORADICALLY AROUND THE CITY'S PERIMETERS AS WELL AS ON THE AIRFIELD AND THE VILLAGE OF TONLE BET ACROSS THE MEKONG.

4. THURSDAY MORNING, WITH CONVOYS POISED TO TRAVEL, COMMUNIST TROOPS MADE TWO ATTACKS AGAINST GOVERNMENT TROOPS ON THE HIGHWAY WEST OF KOMPONG SPEU, TEMPORARILY BLOCKING ROUTE 4 TO KOMPONG SOM ON THE GULF OF THAILAND. GOVERNMENT REACTION FORCES WERE REPORTED MOVING TO REOPEN THE HIGHWAY.

5. COMMUNIST SOLDIERS CUT ROUTE 5 TO BATTAMBANG IN TWO PLACES MONDAY BETWEEN KOMPONG CHHNANG AND TUK LAK BUT BY EARLY TUESDAY BOTH CUTS HAD BEEN CLOSED BY FANK FORCES. THE CUT FROM TUK LAK SOUTHWARD TO SALA LEK PRAM REMAINS UNCHANGED.

6. AND AT VIHEAR SUOR, 13 MILES NORTHEAST OF PHNOM PENH, FANK SOURCES REPORT SLOW BUT STEADY PROGRESS BY RELIEF FORCES PUSHING NORTH TOWARDS THE ISOLATED GARRISON.

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